

REMARKS

Applicants submit this Reply in response to the non-final Office Action dated July 12, 2007. Before this amendment, claims 14-26 were pending, of which claims 14, 20, and 26 were independent. In this response, Applicants have canceled claims 14 and 20 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants have rewritten claims 15 and 21 in independent form and have also amended claims 17, 19, and 26. Accordingly, claims 15-19 and 21-26 are currently pending, of which claims 15, 21, and 26 are independent. Applicants have also amended portions of the specification to correct minor typographical errors. No new matter is being added.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 14 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,253,053 ("Chu"). The Examiner rejected claim 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as directed to non-statutory subject matter. The Examiner objected to claims 15-19 and 21-25 as being dependent on rejected base claims, but indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten into independent form.

Regarding the pending 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejections, Applicants have canceled rejected claims 14 and 20, and have rewritten the allowable claims 15 and 21 into independent form. See Office Action at p. 3 ("Allowable Subject Matter"). Applicants have also amended independent claim 26 to recite similar subject matter as recited in allowable independent claims 15 and 21. Thus, amended claim 26 is also allowable over the art of record, at least because it contains the same allowable subject matter that the Examiner identified in claims 15 and 21.

Regarding the pending 35 U.S.C. § 101 rejection, Applicants have amended independent claim 26 to recite, among other things, a “computer-readable medium storing instructions for execution by a processor, said instructions capable of being loadable in a memory of at least one computer and including software code portions for performing a method” in compliance with the statutory requirements of Section 101. It is well established that “a claimed computer-readable medium encoded with a computer program is a computer element which defines structural and functional interrelationships between the computer program and the rest of the computer which permit the computer program's functionality to be realized, and is thus statutory.” M.P.E.P. § 2106.01(I) (emphasis added).

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 15, 21, and 26, as presently amended, are allowable over the art of record. Dependent claims 16-19 and 22-25 depend on allowable independent claims 15 and 21 and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons.

The preceding remarks are based only on the assertions in the Office Action, and therefore do not address patentable aspects of the invention that were not addressed by the Examiner in the Office Action. The claims may include other elements that are not shown, taught, or suggested by the cited art. Accordingly, the preceding remarks in favor of patentability are advanced without prejudice to other possible bases of patentability.

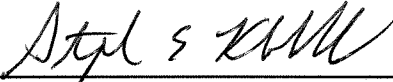
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

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By: 
Stephen E. Kabakoff
Reg. No. 51,276
(404) 653-6477